

“The Making of Political Thought: Ruptures, Trends, and Patterns between Henry VII and Louis the Bavarian”

27-28 September 2018, Strasbourg (France): University of Strasbourg. *Sponsored by:* the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Grant Agreement n. 745584 - INSPIrE (*Intellectuals in History: Political Process and Cultural Impacts in Medieval Europe, 14th-15th c.*). *Organised by* Lorenza Tromboni (Strasbourg) and Gianluca Briguglia (Strasbourg), the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Strasbourg, and the CREΦAC (EA 2326), in cooperation with the “Master d’études médiévales interdisciplinaires” (Université de Strasbourg).

What is the relationship between a historical event and the texts that arise around it? What are the most significant historical events for medieval thought? May a philosophical treatise affect a political decision? The conference arised from such questions, and it aimed at shedding light on the relationship between political events and the composition of texts related to them, focusing on the period between the descent into Italy of Henry VII and the Italian campaign of Louis the Bavarian, that is between 1310 and 1328. These two crucial moments of the fourteenth century are two cores, which give rise to entire networks of texts - treatises, chronicles, poetic works and texts of other genres -, which are often linked to each other. The descent of Henry VII inspired the composition of works such as the *Monarchia* by Dante Alighieri, as well as his political letters. Albertino Mussato wrote no less than three works, reporting the events from 1310 until the end of the Italian campaign of Louis the Bavarian: *De gestis Henrici VII Cesaris*, *De gestis Italicorum post Henricum VII Caesarem*, *Ludovicus Bavarus*. Marsilius of Padua, who was a fellow citizen and a friend of Mussato, outlines the controversy between empire and papacy in his *Defensor pacis*.

The conference pursued two main objectives. The first is to demonstrate the variety of points of view on this historical period. Each scholar was the representative of a specific discipline such as philosophy, philology, the history of thought, institutions and law. This allowed us to reconstruct the period with due complexity by creating a synergy of information and data. Secondly, the aim of the conference was to outline trends and developments in fourteenth-century political thought, which emerged from the discussions on the individual papers and were included in the conclusive remarks of the congress.

The conference lasted one day and a half with Gianluca Briguglia, as co-organiser and supervisor of the INSPIrE project, opening the morning session of the first day: Briguglia presented the project and its aims, shortly reviewing the research path that led to the organization of this conference.

The opening lecture was given by Jürgen Miethke (Universität Heidelberg): *Marsilius of Padua and Louis the Bavarian, a Connection with Consequences*. This lecture was designed to open the conference by dealing with one of the most important texts written in this period, i.e. the *Defensor pacis* by Marsilio of Padova. Miethke's historical reconstruction set out the context of the discussion, prepared the ground for the subsequent papers and provided useful details for the many students who attended the congress. His presentation of the relationship between Marsilius and the imperial authority, his tensions with Pope John XXII and the close link between the *Defensor pacis* and the political events of the area including Italy and Germany made it an ideal starting point to the conference.

After the opening lecture, Lorenza Tromboni presented her methodological introduction in the paper "The Making of Political Thought / La fabrication de la pensée politique". Tromboni set out some of the issues related to the study of medieval political thought. Among others, these include the need for an interpretative approach centered on the relationship between historical facts and the writing of texts; the possibility of linking the data obtained from various disciplines in a synergic and dynamic relationship, overcoming barriers deemed impassable by some specialists; the temptation to study philosophical treatises - even political ones - as separate entities, which only occasionally linked to happens in historical reality; and the preference for so-called political texts, which is often limited to the commentaries on Aristotelian *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics*. Moreover, Tromboni stressed on the importance of works not traditionally considered philosophical for the reconstruction of the past political debate, such as the sonnets by Folgore da San Gimignano, and the letter by Ugucione della Faggiuola on the battle of Montecatini.

Claudia Villa (Bergamo / SNS Pisa) gave a paper entitled "Le songe privé du pape: la déconstruction de l'empire, le mémorial angevin et les bulles de Jean XXII". She presented a massive collection of documents related to the activity of Pope John XXII, focusing especially on the *Memoriale Angevino*, *Annales* by Tolomeo Fiadoni, the accounts of the Papacy's diplomatic relations by Bernard Gui and Bertrand de la Tour, and documents of the papal chancellery.

Contrary to what originally stated in the conference program, Gian Carlo Garfagnini (Università di Firenze) was not able to attend the conference to present "Théologie et politique à Avignon: le débat sur la "visio beatifica" de Jean XXII à Benoît XII". Instead, Rino Modonutti (Università di Padova) gave his paper "Albertino Mussato «ad aulas Cesareas»: l'empereur comme moteur de l'écriture" in the morning of the first day. Modonutti reviewed Mussato's most important works on the two emperors, especially the letters and the historiographical, which highlight Mussato's impartiality in evaluating the figure of Henry, but also a decisive defense of the imperial authority. Among the non-Mussatian sources, we cannot fail to mention the *Historia de situ Ambrosianae urbis et cultoribus*

ipsius et circumstantium locorum ab initio et gestis imp. Henrici VII, by the Milanese notary and chronicler Giovanni da Cermenate: an author whose name emerged on several occasions during the congress, although he was not the specific subject of any of the contributions.

The afternoon session resumed with two reports on the theme of coronation and the right to exercise the imperial power from two different points of view. On one hand, Andrea Tabarroni (Università di Udine), in his paper “Pro parte imperiali: Ugolino da Celle in advocacy of two emperors (1312-1323)”, stressed on the authorship of Ugolino da Celle, vicar of the Italian worlord Castruccio Castracani. Ugolino is known as the author of a legal opinion written in 1323 in favor of Louis the Bavarian’s rights, but Tabarroni explained that the so-called *Memoriale imperatori porrectum*, written in Pisa in 1312/13 in support of Henry VII, should be also attributed to Ugolino. As author of these two texts, Ugolino can be considered as a peculiar intellectual figure, a diplomat in service of the Tuscan Ghibellines. Counting on a different background, the law historian Raphaël Eckert (Université de Strasbourg), in his “Le couronnement impérial dans la doctrine canonique de la première moitié du XIVe siècle” addressed the same issue from a juridical point of view, by analyzing various sources, among which Oldrado da Ponte, Cino da Pistoia e Alberico da Rosciate. Eckert pointed out that despite what we may think, canon law sources do not refer to historical facts: law is seen as an immanent entity, which seems to be unaffected by historical events, whilst the signs of political changes can be detected in the commentaries. According to Eckart, this scenario is counterintuitive, considering that law arises from a practical need of society, and therefore canon law and civil law texts should be even more connected to contemporary political reality than other sources.

The paper of Nadine Holzmeier (Universität Rostock), “The Historiographical Work of Paulinus Minorita and its Political Value”, closed the first day of the conference. Holzmeier dedicated her contribution to the Franciscan friar Paulinus Minorita and his *Chronologia Magna*, showing the distinctive nature of this historiographical work which narrates the main political and religious events from Adam and Eve to the fourteenth century. In the manuscripts, the *Chronologia* presents an unusual and close correlation between text and images, as envisaged by the author: the images follow and complete the text, making this work one of the first examples of 'chronicles through images'. Compared to Mussato’s works - influenced by classical models - the *Chronologia* represents an alternative way of presenting history and political events.

The second day of the congress was intended to be more focused on history, with two papers highlighting the relationship between events and texts in the documentary sources, especially the correspondence of the cities and in the Italian Ghibelline environment. The first paper of this day was given by Giuliano Milani (Université de Paris-Est Marne-la-Vallée) “Devenir gibelin. Les parcours

politiques des partisans italiens d'Henri VII": Milani provided elements for the reconstruction of the extremely fluid Italian Ghibelline environment, in which many individuals, families, or even entire cities, change their orientation according to the political events that threaten or favor their position. The arrival of Henry VII made this context even more complex - described by the author as following 'a sinusoidal trend' - and consolidated Ghibelline identity in relation to Henry and his political choices. Italian cities and the political language expressed in their documents and official letters were the subject of Lorenzo Tanzini's paper (Università di Cagliari), "Langage et culture politique dans la correspondance publique des villes italiennes au début du XIVe siècle. Rhétorique, idéologie, performativité". Tanzini considered the cases of Florence, Bologna, Pisa, Asti and Ascoli, and showed how the arrival of the emperors was received in the public correspondence of these cities. His paper focuses on the specifically political language, which shows the spread of political ideas in response to real-world developments, together with the rhetoric of fidelity, images of struggle and freedom, and the dialectic between tyranny and empire, a constant feature of the political discussion of the fourteenth century on many levels. In the wake of these observations, together with what emerged on the first day, Gianluca Briguglia presented some conclusive remarks on the results of the conference. First, he reiterated the importance of an approach to philosophical and political issues that goes beyond the traditional subdivision within the historical disciplines and makes it possible to exploit the elements provided by all pertinent sources, be they historical, philosophical, juridical, documentary or iconographic. Furthermore, the sources analysed by the speakers showed a tendency to treat the most current and disruptive political events with a certain distance, together with a continuous recourse to the rhetoric of peace in times when conflict marked the daily life of politics, especially Italian politics. Specifically, the title of the most polemical political work of this period, *Defensor pacis*, is dedicated to peace, the conditions that put it in danger and the possible ways by which it can be re-established.

The final lecture of the congress was given by Janet Coleman (London School of Economics and Political Science), whose "Marsilius of Padua's appeal to 'history' and his conclusions on 'toleration' in *Defensor Pacis* Dictio 2" stresses this topic and the relationship between the lay authorities and ecclesiastical power within civil society. Coleman considers Marsilius' Aristotelian background and his rational approach to the problem of civil life, in both political and religious spheres: coexistence within the same environment raises problems related to divergent religious views, such as heresy, which in Marsilius' perspective can be solved by means of rational reasoning.

Lorenza Tromboni
Université de Strasbourg

